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Biblical Notes.

Prophets and Seers. In his recent volume of sermons, noticed in this number of the *STUDENT*, Dr. Whiton has a paragraph on the distinction between the prophet and the seer, which is clear-cut and strong, though somewhat overstated. He regards the seers as not much more than clairvoyants. They stood at a lower level than the prophets. The latter were the preachers of the justice and mercy of God, teachers of the religion of clean hands and pure hearts. He has a fine statement concerning their inspiration, saying that "their Divine inspiration appears in the fact, that they alone in the ancient world heralded that historic evolution of the processes of Divine judgment and redemption, whose unfolding through long ages we trace in the history of the Jewish and of the Christian church. In the dismal decline of their country's glory they alone stood forth to utter that Divine hope, so signally fulfilled in Christ, that Israel should yet survive to give a holy Lawgiver to the world."

Baptized for the Dead. *1 Cor. 15:29.* This vexed passage receives another interpretation in the *Expositor* for March, 1890, which is certainly unique if not satisfactory. The writer calls attention to the probability of the custom in the earlier days of Christianity by which the baptism of the *head* of a household entailed that of the family. But in many families there were doubtless vacant places made by the death of loved ones. Where were they? Would this baptism of the living separate them from the unbaptized dead? If some were scrupulous on this point and hesitated to accept Christianity on this account, the idea of the family, as composed of living and dead, would be likely to call out some custom such as this of the vicarious baptism of living persons in behalf of dead ones. It is thought to be quite conceivable, then, that the "dead" of whom Paul speaks as receiving the benefits of the baptism of others were none other than the departed members of the family newly received into the Christian faith. The idea, however, has little or nothing to support it and much might be urged against it. We have no proof that the baptism of the head of a family entailed that of a household and certainly the apostles, particularly St. Paul, would have shrunk from any ritual act so unreal as this. He could not have imagined the thought that the benefits of baptism could be thus gained for the dead. Nay more, he put no such emphasis on the benefits of this ordinance as the writer of the article assumes. This interpretation, therefore, will probably take its place in the limbo of exploded theories and explanations of crucial passages in Holy Scripture.